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Written for the New York Saturday Press.

LIBERATION.

BY W. D. HOWELL.

In rhyme I fable anguish.

Feigning that my love is dead.

Playing at a game of sadness.

Singing hope forever fled.

Trailing the slow robes of mourning.

Grieving, with the player's art.

With the languid palm of sorrow

Poised on a dancing floor.

I must mix my love with death-dust.

Let the drought should make me mad.

I must make believe at sorrow.

Let I perish over glad.

THE GENTLEMAN
IN THE PLUM-COLORED COAT.

BY DUTTON COOK.

CHAPTER I.

My aunt was the centre of an aureole of good report. She was rumored to be rich. I was strenuously hidden never to forget this fact, and to be accordingly unremittent in my attention to her. "A widow and without a family," exclaimed all my well-wishers; "what is she to do with her money if she does not leave it to her most respectful and respectable of nephews?"

My aunt resided in a quarter of the town which was fashionable about, say a century ago;—for fashion is a vagabond, enjoying the rites of her altars not as freholds in perpetuity, but on leasehold tenures for very short terms of years. Commerce and Poverty are the balliffs that coarsely dog her footsteps, distract upon her chattering, and eject her from her possessions. Yet the neighborhood in which my aunt abode, though fashion had long since wandered miles away from it in pursuit of that aristocratic *quintessence* called exclusiveness, had not suffered deeply in its respectability. The knockers, it is true, no longer trembled beneath the wrought-up energies of radiant footmen; the rattle of cornetted chariots, the shouts of loud-lunged lackeys no longer rounded the echoes of the streets, but Trade as yet held aloof—a Dancoes sword hanging menacingly over the heads of the shopkeepers. The symptoms of fall were unmistakable. The professions had made large inroads on the place. Law and medicine had firmly fixed themselves. Art had been cutting up the first-floor windows. Charity and science were converting the larger mansions into hospitals and institutions. But the Deluge had not yet come. My aunt was secure in the respectability and repose of Abigail Place, Mashaam Square, in the W. C. district of the Potosifos.

When I mention repose, I would have the word understood in a qualified way. For though the vested interests of a century were respected, and the inhabitants were still at liberty to maintain posts, chains, and gates to ward off the profane vulgar, prevent the degrading influence of cars and carts, and generally establish as many obstacles and inconveniences to public comfort as was any way practicable—for though "No thoroughfare" was inscribed in every direction, till the streets got quite rusty and mildewed from want of use, and fringes of dank grass bedecked the pavements—for though a headle was instituted and salaried for the proper preservation of order and quiet—still the repose of the place was subject to severe and degrading invasion. For a while the leaden—how changed from that formerly governing the quietude of Abigail Place, Mashaam Square—was a little withered old man in a faded uniform, off which the gold trimmings had melted like the glories of yesterday's sunset. The coat he was doomed to wear had evidently in its first construction been planned for a much larger person. He was poor and feeble, quite incapable of the martial air and over-swinging dignity proper to the British headle. He suffered from cold in the head, both chronic and acute in its attacks, and in defiance of all regulation properties would insist on disfiguring his uniform by sweltering his chin and neck in a long and many-hued comforter, terminating in worsted balls that swayed and bobbed about before him like parti-colored pippins in a high wind. The former headle's massive staff of office, which seemed to have effloresced and burst out at the top in a large brass bubble, had degenerated in the hands of the existing functionary into a simple bamboo, price one halfpenny. Could such a man so armed hope to make head against the army of boys that resorted to Abigail Place for "the garter," "hop Scotch," and "three-hole" purposes? Was he not rather a byword and a reproach among those intrepid juvenilities? Could he bear the assaults of grinning, white-teethed, olive-faced organ-men with performing monkeys, depressing comic singers, and "la perche" and "globe roulant" acrobats in faded frockings? It was not to be expected of him. He acquiesced in his destiny. He let the peace of Abigail Place take care of itself. If inwardly he lamented the decadence of his official functions, he outwardly betrayed no emotion save a lively appreciation of the Prince of Orange public-house, and the joys to be there purchased at economical cost.

My aunt lived in the old bow-windowed house, No. 6, in Abigail Place. She was an elderly lady, tall and thin, with large, faded features and light grey eyes, stony and staring in effect. Something of a yellow tinge prevailed in her general aspect, from her pale olive complexion, and her persistence in wearing, no matter the season of the year, an Indian shawl of a tawny saffron color. Her long thin hands were always clothed with black mittens, through the interstices of which various jeweled rings sparkled heavily. Stiff ringlets of a dead black hue were coiled upon each side of her forehead, and confined in a manner that fostered suspicion as to their genuineness by a black velvet band, from which a large garnet set in dull gold dangled on her forehead. My aunt's occupations were few. She seldom stirred out of the house, but generally sat all the day through on a large sofa by the fire in her front parlor, with her tawny mantle on her shoulders, her jewel on her forehead—a strange combination of the turban and the night-cap on her head—employed in knitting with her thin black mittened hands, and with wooden needles of

vast calibre, very strong and coarse comforters, the wool-ball in an enclosed basket at her feet, rolling and leaping about as the work required it, unwinding like a desperately active rat in a wire cage. Occasionally, too, she executed other species of work which rendered it necessary that she should insert her foot in a stirrup, and go bowing and joggling on as though she were engaged in equestrian exercise of a prolonged and energetic character. The destination of my aunt's work no one ever knew. As soon as one comforter was completed another was commenced, and by a curious inconsistency, the hotter the weather the more assiduously my aunt seemed to employ herself in the manufacture of extra strong and thick comforters. Occasionally she left her seat to move to the window, and negative by severe shakings of her head: the petitions of pertinacious beggars or obstinate organ-men. And now and then she indulged herself in a promenade up and down her small sitting-room, always walking very upright, and joining her hands behind her in quite a quarter-deck commanding officer sort of way. But her love of exercise was not strong, and she was more frequently to be found sitting on the sofa by the fire, knitting to the musical purring of a fat black and white cat with a pink nose, the very feline incarnation of luxurious content and selfish enjoyment.

My aunt had a favorite and confidential servant named Willis, who had lived with her for about thirty years; and, probably from this cause, and from being invested and attired in many articles weeded from my aunt's wardrobe, had acquired no inconsiderable resemblance to her. She was some years younger and stouter, and more active; but she also wore hair of dense blackness, fastened on her forehead, though unbound by a jewelled fillet. She also assumed at times much of my aunt's rigid and severe expression; wore on her head a fabric of wire and mail, in which some type of Orientalism was traceable, and which she called a "turban"; and rejoiced in black mittens on her hands, though of a less open and heavier material. Her respect for my aunt amounted to veneration. Her care and attention were unremitting; and my aunt rewarded the fidelity of her companion by admitting her to closer terms of intimacy and friendship than are usual between mistress and servant. Her regard for my aunt Willis also, though in a less degree, extended to her relatives. I know that I often received at her hands an amount of homage that was almost embarrassing.

It was a peculiarity shared by my aunt and Willis to clothe me with a youthfulness which was really inappropriate. My aunt invariably addressed me as "child," and Willis always preferred to give me the prefix of "master" in lieu of the more mature "mister," to which my years very fairly entitled me.

"Willis, take the child's hat," said my aunt, whenever I called to pay my respects and inquire after her health. She never rose from her seat, but always nodded her head in a severely kind way, and held out a thin cold finger for me to shake.

"I hope you're quite well, Master?" inquired Willis, in a friendly, patronizing way. It was wonderful with what a schoolboy feeling I became possessed. It always seemed as likely as not that they would on some occasion invite me to spin a top, or would produce a rocking horse for my delectation, or promise me a feast of roasted bread-and-butter to be eaten without missing a word. "The boy stood on the burning deck," or "My name is Norval." I know my aunt maintained a habit of furtively "tipping" me with bright silver coins long after I was eight-and-twenty years of age.

"How do you grow, Master?" Willis would go on, good-naturedly; "quite out of all knowledge." If she meant old, she was tolerably correct; but if, as I believe, she alluded to my height, it was a singular observation, since for many a long day no inch had been added to my stature.

I generally called upon my aunt in the evening. Our conversation was not very well sustained. It seldom comprised more than a discussion on the weather, my aunt always maintaining that the seasons had quite changed since she was a girl, with occasional digressions as to the progress of my aunt's knitting achievements, and the state of health of the black and white cat with the pink nose. At eight o'clock my aunt always put away her work, folded her hands before her, placed her feet upon the fender,—she had a fire nearly all the year round,—and sat quite still for nearly half an hour. She was not asleep; but she kept her eyes fixed on the clock over the mantelpiece. I remember that dial well: it was a curious piece of French ingenuity that did not keep very correct time, and represented the figure of a harlequin in a loose patchwork suit and black mask, carrying on his back a large drum, the side of which formed the face of the clock. It was hemmed in by a variety of grotesque china ornaments, terminating at either end of the shelf in a green dog in a gold collar,—an animal of unnatural and surpassing hideousness. My aunt watched the clock until it chirped the half-hour: she then rang the bell.

"Tea, Willis." Soon after Willis entered with a large urn, something of the funeral form seen in cemeteries, and with large rings at the side by which to carry it: it only wanted a wedding willow over it to complete an admirable sign for a mourning shop. The teapot was a large china vessel, with a remarkable sort of basket suspended from its spout for filtering purposes. My aunt poured hot water into the pot with great solemnity. I know I always—I suppose for want of better occupation—watched the operation with considerable interest. I counted the number of spoonfuls of tea put into the pot: one for my aunt, I thought,—one for me,—one for the pot,—and one—who was the fourth? I always wondered, for she always put four in; and then I always noticed that three cups had been brought up; two of a neat ordinary pattern for my aunt and myself, and a third of much more elaborate design, richly gilded, and pictured over with glowing rosebuds and festoons of green vine-leaves and golden grapes. Who was this cup for? The process of brewing the tea was one of some duration. My aunt turned her eyes to the clock at every pause in the proceeding. It was nine o'clock by the time the tea was ready for outpouring. As the clock struck my aunt rang the bell again.

"Well, Willis?" my aunt said, inquiringly: Willis wore a vague mysterious look.

"It's nine and past," she said.

"Yes!" My aunt heaved a deep sigh.

"He'll hardly be here now," Willis continued.

"No." My aunt looked very sad indeed. Willis shook her head strongly and solemnly.

"He must knock by this time," said my aunt.

"Of course he does," Willis answered, "unless—"

"Unless what?" My aunt looked up eagerly.

"Unless he's gone to the Northeast," Willis spoke in a low voice.

"Or to the Southeast?" My aunt bowed her head in a mournful way.

"Ay, or to the Northwest," Willis went on.

"Or to the Southwest?" My aunt hid her face in her handkerchief. The minute-hand on the harlequin's drum was dealing on to the quarter-past: my aunt roused herself.

"I should never forgive myself, if he were to come and find us unprepared for him."

Willis seemed to think the consequences of such a contingency would be utterly terrible.

"You had better go to the corner, Willis, and look out."

"Certainly."

And Willis left the room, and I could hear her go into the street. My aunt did not speak or move, or take the slightest notice of my presence: she kept her gaze fixed to the clock. In a few minutes Willis returned. My aunt turned towards her anxiously; but the expression on Willis's countenance seemed to be a sufficient answer.

"He'll not come now," said my aunt.

"I think not."

"And the night's fine?"

"Very fine."

"Not too cold?"

"No, not too cold."

"I'm glad of that. Thank you, Willis: that will do, Willis. Put coal on, Willis. Elder wine at ten o'clock, Willis."

What did this mean? The same formula went on each time I paid my evening visit to my aunt. The same interchange of looks and words; the same question and reply; the same doubts about the North and Southeast, the North and Southwest; the same going out into the street; the same gazing at the clock; the same return alone of Willis, and observations upon the weather. What did it all mean? This was my aunt's mystery. In vain I sought some explanation of the enigmas; in vain I tried to dissipate the clouds about it by some reasonable solution; in vain I put the case to my friends, and besought their views in regard to it. I was only recommended to boldly inquire of my aunt. I was a long time before I could make up my mind to adopt this course. At length human patience could survive it no longer.

"Whom do you expect, aunt?" I boldly broke out with one evening, after a more than usually protracted performance of the mystery.

"Hush, Master—," cried Willis, with a frightened gesture.

"Children shouldn't ask questions," said my aunt grimly, and with a petrifed look about her eyes. She was seriously offended; she did not speak to me again that evening. At ten o'clock she took her usual refreshment of a glass of hot ink-looking elder wine, and a stick of dry toast, and then was led away to bed by Willis.

I never dared to repeat the inquiry. People said my aunt was mad,—had a loose state,—was the expression—and satisfied themselves with that explanation, but it never satisfied me. That some fixed notion absorbed her, that her whole faculties were concentrated upon one particular idea, seemed likely. Yet this, though it lacked form a little, was not like madness.

II.

To reach the root of an old tree one must dig down very deep.

To arrive at the commencement of my aunt's mystery, I have to turn back a good many pages of *The Press*.

I have to revert to days when those extinct marvels called *Tory gentlemen*, over deep glasses of *Ferry Pot*, held "Boney" in stinging derision; when an elderly prince, complacently *debonnaire*, with a strong feeling for *suborn wigs* and massive, balustrade-like calves, swayed the destiny of Britain as deputy for a more elderly king, whom mental embarrassment had constrained to retire from the business; when Lawrence was painting glittering-eyed, carmine-lipped, milk-skinned women; when Canova was chiselling forest-compromises between the antique nymph and the modern flirt; when Byron was dropping at intervals his red-hot shells of poems upon amazed London.

It is not with London that I have to deal, however, but with the classic city founded by *Bladud*, Son of *End*, *Hudibras*, Eighth King of the *Britons*,—with *Bath*, of hot-spring and pump-room fame, shining like a green gem, and close beside its hills, like a lump of white sugar in a green cup.

There is quite a blinding forest of wax-candles in the Assembly Rooms, rapidly filling with a most distinguished company. The clatter of dance-music rings through the elegant salons, making the very glass beads of the chandeliers jump and click themselves together. The master of the ceremonies is in the extreme apogee of his office. He shuffles and deals out the company like a conjuror with his cards, never once lessening the more eligible or trumps, and winning all sorts of odd tricks by his address and slight of hand.

I desire to point out a young lady making her *début* at this ball. She is tall and slight, not ungainly. She is beautiful, but attractive from her amiable, subdued, rather shy expression. Her attire is in the mode of the day; the dress scanty in quantity, and peculiar in form,—"gored," I believe to be the correct disposition, and did not treat his wife too tenderly; he was violent, turbulent, cruel man, with no thought but for himself. The kindest action he ever performed towards his poor frightened wife was when, thirty-five years after his marriage, he made her his widow, and was interred with extraordinary pomp in the vaults of Marylebone Church.

The widow bore her bereavement like King Claudius, "with wisest sorrow;" she sold off a great deal of her large cumbersome furniture, and with the rest, and a faithful old servant who had been with her almost from her marriage, and who, as the reader will have inferred, bore the name of Willis, settled down in a quiet and respectable street known as Abigail Place, Mashaam Square, W. C.

III.

One day I had seen the formula of the mystery for the last time. My poor old aunt, in a quiet, painless illness, had passed away. Willis was in very great distress.

"Ah! Master—," she was the kindest, sweetest, goodest mistress that ever was!" Willis sobbed piteously. "I shall never find such another; never—never! Poor soul, it's a comfort to think that she didn't want for nothing. It's a consolation to reflect on, that. Her wants weren't many, but she had them all supplied."

A thought occurred to me.

Willis looked up inquiringly through her tears.

"It didn't come."

Willis started, and turned quite pale.

"O Master—, how did you know anything about it?"

"I know all," I said.

It was a shameful artifice. I assumed a mysterious, solemn, and meaning air, that quite imposed upon Willis, and led her on to forgetting her sorrows in conversation. Gradually the narrative of the Bath ball-room came from her. On the particular gathering from Willis I have founded that portion of my story. As the reader has no doubt conjectured, the lady who sat down with the gentleman in the plum-colored coat was my aunt.

not yet yielded her waist to the arm of the male waiter. Should she now submit? The question could be no longer begged, for the stupendous master of the ceremonies was approaching, and leading towards her a gentleman, evidently a dancer, and the orchestra struck up that defunct air "Lieber Augustin," one of the first waltzes imported. I shall not attempt to describe further the master of the ceremonies; for though but a dim representative of that renowned Beau Nash, whose sceptre he swayed, I feel that so great a subject cannot fittingly be treated epically. I turn therefore to the gentleman who is being plied so dexterously through the crowded throngs of the ball-room.

It was rather a transitional period. "The blood," was dying out—the fighting, strong, swaggering, hard-headed, muscular blood was fairly going out of fashion. "The swell" was not born or thought of, being entirely of a nobility of recent creation. There were the interim stages of the "buck" and the "dandy." *Debshew* was the vogue, the latest ruling mode. Gentlemen boasted of their weak nerves, interchanged yagyd Brummels, padded their limbs and shoulders, plastered curls on their foreheads, even to their eyebrows, splashed about *Esau de Clapnet* to keep off the cold of "low people," wore stags, and bragged as having done a daring coming thing, that they "had one and a pos!" The man of fashion of that day was not altogether a thing to be very highly respected.

The gentleman in the case of the master of the ceremonies was an average specimen of his class. He was good-looking, according to the modern view, as his costume would permit him to be. "Knees and silks" were becoming the peculiar properties of the professions and of old gentlemen. Pantaloons were the intermediate step to the trousers of to-day. Necks were worn long, and mutilated and buckramed to a point that seemed to put life in peril. The bow of the necktie was a thing on which to stake a reputation—to accomplish, and then die. Waistcoats were short, and heavy watch-chains hung from the fob-pockets, weighted with bunches of massive seals and keys. Pumps were the fashion, with ribbed silk stockings. A luxuriant foliage of frilling flourished upon the bosom, and violet-hued waistcoats were worn with false collars of supposititious other waistcoats appearing above the genuine. The gentleman I am referring to wore a bright green silk "vest," adorned by a collar of red and then a collar of white. His coat was long, narrow, and pointed at the tails, very tight in the sleeves, very rolling in the collar—very much puffed up on the shoulders. It was decorated with gilt button-holes, and its color was plum—a vivid and fruity plum.

The lady, speechless and trembling, hardly knowing what she did, yielded to the entreaties of the master of the ceremonies—to the polite application of the gentleman. In a sort of unconscious way she stood up to join in the dance. The gentleman appreciating her trouble and diffidence, considerably sooned her waist with his firm and decided manner, and they started off to their revolving exploit. They succeeded, for they were both excellent dancers. The room passed to witness their wonderful circling career. There was a loud cheer of "admirable!" Only a few severe ladies, with strong prejudices in favor of the "Gavotte," "Sir John," and "The Bank," growled out lowly, but in a "respectful" manner, and the crowd of admirers condescended to congratulate the dancers on their triumph. Such a thing was almost without precedent.

Between the lady and the gentleman, however, little conversation passed, for dancing and talking are not altogether compatible. Once he asked her if she would take some negus; once he admired her fan; once he inquired if she didn't think the room hot; and when they parted for the evening he muttered an incomplete sentence, something about his regret that an acquaintance so delightfully begun should cease so suddenly, and that if the devotion of a life—; but here a lurch in the crush-room snapped the sense of the observation, and parted the lady and gentleman. He jerked out, "Too bad, poor honor!" put his quivering glass to his eyes, and went to look for some more supper,—for romance only defers, it does not satiate the appetite.

The lady went home, and in due time sank back into her retired country life. The always thought of her evening in the Bath ball-room, as one of the most important events in her life; she often dreamt of her partner, the gentleman in the plum-colored coat; she was never tired of talking of him. Often she dwelt upon the delights of her first waltz; often she looked in subsequent ball-rooms for that exquisite partner in the plum-colored coat. She made all sorts of inquiries about him; sought to ascertain his name—his place of abode—but not successfully. She was unable to fix upon him any more definite title than that of the gentleman in the plum-colored coat.

After a lapse of some years, the young lady was sought in marriage, and duly led to the altar by the gentleman returned from the East Indies, with the reputation of being "a nabob." Her heart was not greatly in the business; but with that, of course, nobody had anything to do. The nabob was not of a very amiable disposition, and did not treat his wife too tenderly; he was violent, turbulent, cruel man, with no thought but for himself. The kindest action he ever performed towards his poor frightened wife was when, thirty-five years after his marriage, he made her his widow, and was interred with extraordinary pomp in the vaults of Marylebone Church.

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"Ah, Master—," Willis went on, shaking her head to and fro, pathetically, "my poor mistress had a sad time of it. Her late husband was a hard, hard man. He'd been accustomed to such slave-driving ways in the Indies, he couldn't treat a simple English lady properly. My poor mistress was often very sad, and wretched about him, and at last, and thought and cried over her young days, and how quiet and happy they were; and often she talked of the ball at Bath, and her dancing and her partner there. And then five years after my master died she had a long, long illness, and her head was a good bit troubled; and when she recovered, which wasn't for ever so long, she got to rambling back to her young times more than ever, and her memory was touched like, and she could only recollect the things which happened quite far back. Then she would be always talking of the Bath gentleman, and she got it fixed in her mind that she should meet him again even yet; and that now she was free again, he would make her an offer of his hand, in pledge of the devotion of a life, and they would be married and happy at last. She got to be forever talking of this, and wanting to make fresh inquiries, and try and find him out. At last old Mrs. Luff came here one day to do some charring work, and she was full of a wise-woman living next door to her in Brook's Buildings."

"A what?"

"A wise-woman—a good woman, some call them—who knew everything, could do all sorts of conjuring tricks, tell you all you'd done, bless you, in the whole course of your life, and predict the future by looking in tea-cups and spreading out packs of cards. Well, my mistress heard of this, and at last made up her mind to see the woman, and try if she could tell where the gentleman was to be found. Well, they had long consultations, and my mistress gave the woman all sorts of things to work the spells with, as she called it: now it was cold meat, now it was gowns, now ston, now bonnets, and now it was one of every coin of the realm, to be left on the door-step at the full moon, and to be gone by the morning—look by the spirits, she said. Well, at last she gave her prediction. It was about time, for it had cost her so much money. She said that my mistress and the gentleman would be sure to meet again, and would be happy; that the gentleman was travelling, but the stars wouldn't quite tell her where; that he must be written to, and that as it stood to reason he must be either in the North, South, East, or West, four letters must be sent so addressed, and one would be sure to reach him."

"And my aunt wrote?"

"Yes, Master—; she wrote four letters: they were all alike. She kept a copy of what she wrote; I know where to find it—I'll show it to you."

She produced a sheet of notepaper, written upon in my aunt's cramped, irregular writing. The letter ran thus:

DEAR SIR,—Many years ago you may remember reading the present article at a ball in the Bath ball-room, over white silk, with a blue sash. I wore a lace frock over white silk, with a blue sash. I wore a green waistcoat and a plum-colored coat. I have been married, but my husband is dead, and I am now free again. Pray come and see me. There is nothing now to prevent our union.

Your affectionate,

NARAH ARABELLA.

P. S.—I address this from the house with the low yellow walls. Recollect this, please, as there are four number sixes.

There was no date, nor was the address given, and my aunt had apparently only signed her Christian name.

How were the letters directed?

"Simply 'To the Gentleman in the Plum-colored Coat, North, South, East, West.'"

"Well," we were to post the letters at the most distant London postoffice we could find. My mistress hired a fly and went round posting her letters. One was put in at Camberwell, one at Islington, one at Kennington, and one in Whitechapel. The wise-woman was told of this, and said we had done quite right. My mistress then gave her her sash lace and muff, and she then predicted that the gentleman would arrive in a very few days, and that he would appear precisely at tea-time, at nine o'clock.

"He didn't come,"

"He didn't, indeed, Master—! But my mistress was always expecting him. When after a few weeks she got tired a little, she sent again to the wise-woman to try to learn more about him. But the wise-woman had left the neighborhood suddenly, and we couldn't find out where she had moved to. Then we had a great talking over of the matter, and my mistress wouldn't give up that he would come yet, but was only frightened about his having gone to the Northeast or Northwest, or to the Southeast or Southwest, and so not got the letters. She expected him, and made tea for him, and waited, and sent me out to look for him every night, poor thing, right up to her death last Tuesday."

"And did you expect him, Willis?"

"Well, Master—! What with the wise woman, and my mistress, and the innocent talking about him, and the perpetual wondering whether and when he'd come, I got to think of it at last as all true and likely, and to actually believe that he would come. Ah! it's a sad business to think that she should have died and not seen him again after all? Poor soul! poor soul!"

And Willis gave way again to her tears.

My aunt's mystery was explained.

Her mind, never very strong, in the last years of her life still further weakened by grief, and shattered and assailed by bitter and illness, had strayed back to the one happy passage in her rather dull and doleful life, and clung to it with a tenacity which only death could relax. The desire to meet again her first waltz partner had swelled and ripened into a confirmed monomania.

I never read in the newspapers of a fortune-teller taken up for swindling, but I think of the wise-woman who preyed upon my aunt, and trust that the worthy magistrate will deal out the law with the utmost rigor. I never see a stout old gentleman, curly in wig and hat-rim, tight in his girths, and with a general air of the regency back about him, decking the windows of a St. James's street club, or taking very cautious promenades in Pall Mall, but I ask myself whether it is possible he could have been the gentleman who wore the plum-colored coat and waltzed with my aunt at the Bath ball in 18—.

I may mention that my aunt's wealth had been the subject of a grievous exaggeration. The nabob had played highly, and at his death left his widow little more than a comfortable annuity, which died with her. Of her savings, however, there was enough to secure a small pension for the faithful Willis. All that I received—at any rate, all that I now possess—of my aunt's property is comprised in my chimney decorations: the French harlequin with the drum-clock, and the hideous green china dogs.—Ours is Wink.

—A literary gentleman now on a visit to Orkney and Zealand—Mr. Dunsen, of the *London Times* editorial staff—has undertaken to publish the *Orkneying Saga*. He is at present collecting materials for illustrative notes. The work will be welcomed by Orkadians in all quarters of the world.

JOVE'S GREATEST BLESSING.

BY A. P. BAKER.

If I from great Jove had the choice of a boon,
Best fitted to keep Life's strained saddle in tune,
I'd choose—Money-Grobbars, don't sneer so and start!
Choose, by the gods! I would choose a Young Heart!
This glorious gift, with a magical power,
To brighten the bright, or to cheer the dark hour.
Though from Fortune's fair face the glad smile should depart,
What matter? so long as you've got a Young Heart!
Oh! best is the mortal whose course has been such,
From the wild boyhood's hope to the old age's crush,
To ensure the best blessing that Jove can impart,
The head of a man, and a child's Merry Heart!
So come, let us see if we can't shape our ways,
To live loving and loved for the rest of our days:
Life, at last, is up hill, and old Care is the cart,
But the load is made light by a merry Young Heart.

THE BARTLETT-LETTERS.

The Orkney Wedding and the Press.

NEW YORK, Monday, Oct. 17, 1859.

To the Editor of the New York Times:
The article in your issue of this date, headed "The Orkney Wedding—The Press and Privacy," and intended as a reply by you to articles in the Philadelphia *Press* on the late wedding, does very great injustice to me and the members of my family. We claim to be strictly a private family; and it is entirely a mistake, from whatever source it may emanate, to say that, either individually or collectively, we—or, as you have it—

"They have themselves never claimed for it the immunities which New York journals are quite as ready to accord to private affairs as our neighbors further South. They have on the contrary not only consented to its being regarded and treated as a public affair, but have given all possible aid to the newspapers in their endeavor to enlighten the public in regard to it. It certainly was not without their knowledge that the fact of the engagement was made known months ago through the *Press*; the statements of the extent and nature of the bridegroom's wealth were no minute, and we presume too accurate, to have come from any but the most reliable quarter, especially as he had not previously been well enough known in New York to render such details otherwise accessible."

It is without our knowledge that the *Press* were apprised of the engagement, but we could not deny the fact, when it was strictly true. I did urge upon editors, friends whom I met, not to admit such paragraphs into their columns, and yet some copied constantly the letters of gossiping New York correspondents to papers in other cities. People, whether friends or otherwise, hurried to the shops for news, or waylaid our servants with inquisitive questions, and did not hesitate to announce the gross absurdity that the presents ordered amounted to \$600,000, that I had been presented with a house, etc., etc. To have denied those thousand and one gossiping tales would have kept me inundating your columns with cards of denial, and made me altogether ridiculous before the public. My house was daily annoyed with insulting, anonymous letters, and so was Mr. Orkney's, until we determined not to show his beautiful presents to any others than the very intimate relations of my or his family. And yet we are to be held up to the world as calumniators to the moral curiosity of gossipers. Is it a crime against society to have a large circle of acquaintances, and to write to them to witness a marriage ceremony? Is it any fault of ours that thousands surrounded the church, who had not been invited? And having a large acquaintance among the gentlemen and ladies of the city—having been myself twenty-five years in the public service, and been associate proprietor and editor of journals on both sides of our continent—(having myself written the first editorial ever printed in the now famous city of San Francisco and with my own hands, when Chief Magistrate there, pulled the press for the first printed sheet ever printed in that city)—was it so remarkable, then, that I should hold that editors were gentlemen, and therefore worthy to be presented to any family, even if I did not happen to know every one who, having scribbled a paragraph, writes himself down as of the *Press*, or that I was obliged to refuse for cards of invitation which I was obliged to refuse, and thus, perhaps, got up a feeling of hostility?

I must differ with you as to the object of these invitations. Editors and writers were invited as *gentlemen*, not because they were editors. I have no knowledge of any "reporter" receiving any card as such, although I have many gentleman friends among the "reporters" of the City Press.

I know that the various establishments which received orders from Mr. Orkney have been for months daily importuned for information and requested to exhibit their handiwork, while, by their instructions, they have been obliged to refuse such applications, at least until after the wedding; and parties, not satisfied with such an answer, have not hesitated to force orders to view, yet with no better success.

If editors are ready and willing to publish any and all sorts of gossiping paragraphs, either as original or copied, it is a double insult that you should then turn round and charge that the party who feels offended by the paragraph has himself produced it.

It would seem that a stranger who comes among us with the highest credentials as to character and position at home, is not to be allowed to

Special Notices.

KANE MONUMENT ASSOCIATION.

Will enter a course of TEN LECTURES, commencing early in November, and continue weekly until finished. The services of the most eminent lecturers in the country have been procured, and will be announced in a few days. To let for the course, admitting a lady and gentleman, a single ticket for the course, \$1; single Lecture tickets, 10 cents.

JOHN W. WHITE,
Chairman Lecture Committee.

Speaking of the present.

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9 Spruce street, New York.

The N. Y. Saturday Press.

HENRY CLAPP, Jr., Editor.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 22, 1859.

A Word to Subscribers.

Our friends who annual subscriptions to THE SATURDAY PRESS, please send us their remittance by the first of the month, as usual.

CARD.

THE SATURDAY PRESS enters, this week, upon its second year; and while it is worth while to be glad to see it, it is worth while to be glad to see it.

It was our intention to celebrate the occasion by a short address to the public, setting forth, with such modesty as we could command, the claims of the paper, and pointing in as bright colors as our pallet might afford, its in some respects remarkable success.

And, in fact, in one respect—to wit, so far as extension of our circulation is concerned, we have made a somewhat brilliant statement, and still kept within the bounds of truth.

But extensive appreciation, however enthusiastic, is not, in itself, enough.

What we need is an extensive subscription list. And this, we, of course, cannot honestly pretend to; at any rate, we are within the millions.

To carry on the paper as it has been carried on hitherto—preserving its entire independence, adding new features almost every week, and constantly improving its typographical and general character—we ought to have an immediate addition of several thousand subscribers, and a corresponding increase of advertisements.

This would make us all right; without it, we are all wrong; and hence it is that we take the liberty, without further preface, of suggesting to all who feel an interest, friendly or otherwise, in continuing THE SATURDAY PRESS, that they do all in their power—and do it, if possible, this week—towards inducing as many persons as they can, everywhere, to send in their subscriptions and advertisements.

N. B.—It has just occurred to us that, in order to give the reader a more exact idea of the state of our mind at this crisis, we may as well print here a letter we have this morning written in confidence to a personal friend. It is verbatim; and the reader will please consider it as addressed in the main to himself.

NEW YORK, 9 Spruce street, 1
October 22, 1859.

My Dear Friend:—

You ask kindly,—almost tenderly,—about THE SATURDAY PRESS, expressing the fear that, as the *Sunday Courier* once said, "The child is too bright to live." I can answer for the brightness of the child, but I can hardly confess that it has not yet given any signs of remarkable longevity.

I do not even agree with you as to its "precoity." It strikes me, on the contrary, as having been up to this time, preternaturally backward; so much so that I have often wondered at the compliments bestowed upon it, not only by yourself but by hundreds of others.

Also, that a paper could not be supported by compliments! I do not say this to reflect upon you, or upon anybody, but merely because it just occurs to me that if every one who had praised our little sheet had gone a step further and subscribed to it—it would now have been making instead of losing money.

Six months ago—in the height of the Spring business—we had such a crowd of advertisements that, for the first time, the paper began paying its expenses. This fact so delighted me that I could not help throwing up my cap in exultation, and calling upon my readers to exult with me.

In fact, I shouted before I was out of the woods; for after the Spring came the long dead Summer, when everybody was out of town, and when business of all kinds was at a stand-still; and as assured, my good fellow, we had a hard time of it to get through.

We got through, however,—thanks to two or three enthusiastic friends, God bless them!—and now enter upon our second year, full of hope it is true, and never once dreaming of failure, but still with anything but the light heart and lightness of step of youth.

I feel, indeed, as if I had been at work on the paper twenty years, and had all the while been toiling uphill—as indeed, I have been.

Our great difficulty from the beginning has been want of means to advertise sufficiently. In consequence, the paper has had to push its own way, and thus instead of reaching ten or twenty thousand persons every week, as it would otherwise have done, it not read by more than four or five thousand.

And this "situation" though few will not suffice. I beg of you, therefore, to do what you can towards swelling our subscription list. If all our friends would do this everything would be right; otherwise we shall have even a harder struggle this year than we had last.

I know it is imprudent to make this confession even to you. But why sell under false colors? Why not frankly avow that in the absence of capital,—and a thousand or two dollars is all we need,—the paper stands in absolute need of immediate increase of its business?

I have half a mind to avow as much publicly, if only to ascertain whether THE SATURDAY PRESS has in truth as many ardent friends as it would appear to have. If I do this, I shall do it with all the more confidence from the fact that it has been my endeavor, from the beginning, to establish personal rather than commercial relations between the paper and its readers.

Moreover, it has been my endeavor to print a paper which my friends could be proud of—a paper which no one need be otherwise than proud of.

I may not have succeeded in this; but such has been my aim. Errors I have doubtless committed in order to reach some very serious ones have been kindly pointed out to me by persons like yourself—but as soon as found out I have always been prompt and careful to redress them. But I will not waste more of your time.

Do what you can for us, doing it promptly, and I will see to it that the paper improves every week. In fact I have already made arrangements for the ensuing year which, if carried out, will make THE SATURDAY PRESS the most valuable as well as the most entertaining paper in the country. For that matter it ought to be making thousands a year, now, out of its Book List alone, the importance of which cannot well be overestimated.

Beginning you to give me any hints that occur to you, believe me to be, as ever,
Your friend,
H. C. J.

MODESTY MILITANT.

MR. WASHINGTON BARTLETT having won the wind of notoriety in the matter of his daughter's marriage with Don Esteban Santa Cruz de Oviedo, begins to reap the whirlwind; this, however, does not satisfy him. To him a whirlwind is the merest puff. He yearns for a tornado. He is resolved to secure it. The method he adopts has ingenuity, if not novelty, to recommend it. He institutes a series of "Corrections" of unimportant details, and clothing them in the language of injured dignity, sends them forth to the world through the columns of the public journals. But unfortunately Mr. Bartlett's ambition vaults too high. It overlaps itself. The motive is too clearly apparent to be for an instant misapprehended. Even were it not too late at this day to assume the virtue of humility and modesty, Mr. Bartlett's manner of doing it would at once convict him.

The fact appears to be that this gentleman's appetite for fashionable fame is unappeasable. That his daughter should be glorified as she has been by the resonant rhetoric of a dozen reportorial pens, is not enough. He considers that his claim to the position of *parvenu* in the recent social comedy has not been recognized with sufficient distinctness. He purposes to correct this. He therefore formulates defiant manifestoes, in which he imports to the community the intelligence that he has "been twenty-five years in the public service, and been associate proprietor and editor of journals on both sides of our continent;" that he himself wrote the first editorial ever printed in the now famous city of San Francisco, and with "his own hands, when Chief Magistrate there, pulled the press for the first printed sheet ever printed in that city;" that "his daughter has spoken and written in the Spanish and French languages fluently from childhood;" and other items of equal public importance, set forth with all the intensity of italics and small capitals. Now this is not the language of a man who shrinks from notoriety. It is evidently an ill-concealed attempt to fan into a lasting flame the already falling spark of public interest which his indecidentally-ventilated private eccentricities had awakened. It is an effort to prolong the agony of excitement, which for a brief hour, stamped him with the name of a *parvenu*, and to stand in immediate exposure before the staring scrutiny of the world.

We confess to no such Pharisaical faith as that avowed by some journals which, while reviling the alleged indecency of open comment upon an occurrence like this, gloat with particular affection over its minutest features. With the Philadelphia Press, for instance, which republishes the entire report of one of the New York papers in one column, and devotes another to wreakings of typographical wrath upon the spirit of journalism which justifies such narrations, we have no sympathy. We feel that this Oviedo wedding, from beginning to end, was a subject eminently suited to newspaper discussion. We believe that it was so intended by its projectors; that mines were carefully laid, to be sprung at the proper moment for the benefit of the general curiosity; that plans were deftly devised for insuring the largest share of publicity. For a month New York was effervescent upon this matter. To deny it newspaper consideration would have disappointed everybody, and no persons more, we believe, than those most immediately concerned. But with the culmination of the event, the public would naturally have paused, and suffered the parties to return to the obscurity in which Mr. Bartlett, it seems, will not permit them to repose. Our community is easy to forget, and Mr. Bartlett's wounds, if he had received any, would have healed the quicker, had he not thus invited renewed irritation. A disturbed paternal sense of wrong does not seek relief in newspaper proclamations as to a daughter's linguistic capabilities, nor in the protrusion of additional and quite irrelevant personal information. Mr. Bartlett says of himself and his household: "We claim to be a strictly private family." Why, then, those new revelations of his own antecedents, which nobody ever heard of and nobody cares for? He says that, from the first intimation of his daughter's engagement, "people hurried to the shops for news, or waylaid his servants with inquisitive questions." This is certainly an avowed calculated to inspire belief in the writer's sensitiveness! It is quite a new bit of intelligence, piquant and odorous. He moreover asks with some show of feeling, "Is it a crime to have a large circle of acquaintances, and to write to them to witness a marriage ceremony? Is it any fault of ours that thousands surrounded the church who had not been invited?" Hardly, we should judge; but allowing these questions to be put in good faith, and restraining all inquiry in the matter of the thousands of invitation cards printed—not written—with accurate directions as to the course to be adopted by holders, and variously reprinted to secure precedence of certain colors—whence emanated the tickets possessed by the myriad strangers, none of whom had ever heard the name of Bartlett, and who wondered at the glare of impudence which sought to include them in so vain a pageant? Perhaps Mr. Bartlett will say, as he has said of the orders to view the bridal gifts while in course of preparation at the warehouses, that they were "forged." This, indeed, is not unlikely, as he has intimated his design, in case of necessity, to continue his contributions to the current literature of the day. He will, perhaps, explain the mystery of those subtle allusions to reportorial hostility caused by his refusal to confer invitations in certain cases. He will possibly reiterate his ideas respecting the beauty of Don Esteban's person. He will again assure us of his former journalistic distinctions in terms showing that, according to his notion, a correct use of English language is not an essential point of editorial eminence. He may, indeed, relate closer particulars of his daughter's earlier education and of her course during the progress of her courtship, than he has yet vouchsafed. After this he will not doubt arise in all the reticence of imputed pride, and say, "Behold, how temperate I am! Emulate my reticence, O Editor, and cease to scatter broadcast the vulgar vanities which I would not for the world encourage. Respect the sanctity of retiring privacy, and let oblivion's balm, for which I clamor day by day, fall soothingly upon me!" But, Mr. Bartlett, we think the public will not see it.

THE N. Y. SATURDAY PRESS.
PRIVATE OPINIONS PUBLICLY EXPRESSED.

DEAR PRESS.—The long Autumnal evenings are nearly over, and will soon glide into the still longer ones of Winter. Now's the time for the Opera, the Theatre, and "last, not least," this quotation is not quite new, the lecture, which has within a few years become established as one of America's peculiar institutions.

The Theatre and the Opera we leave to the treatment of the laic Personae; but the Lecture we reserve for ourselves, and following the high example of our clerical guide, whom we'll christen Cyril, allow us, oh, Able Editor (we know your amiability else we wouldn't ask it) to divide our discourse into three grand parts, a trinity of divisions, somewhat thus:

I. The Lecture.
II. The Lecture.
III. The Lecture.

To begin at the beginning, as the French say, the lecturer is of two kinds, namely, the illustrious brilliant, and the illustrious obscure. We all know what the first is—usually some wide-awake, go-ahead, original man, who speaks from his inmost heart, and consequently interests his audience. But the second is generally the big man of a little town, aspiring enough, but too weak-winged intellectually, to realize his spread-eagle aspirations; and being immediately desirous of extending his narrow fame, patches together a lecture, and sallies out before wondering provincial audiences, to talk, and if possible, to entertain. Bennett (James Gordon) probably had this class of lecturers in mind, when he told the Princetonians that lecturing was the business of none but literary loafers.

Such then are the two classes of lecturers who go about the country, as somebody has observed (possibly Jacob), retelling their ideas at twenty-five cents a head, from seats reserved for the ladies, and children half-price.

For the lecture, that is also of two kinds,—have, earnest, glowing, and energetic; or opinionated, frothy, and stupid. One is given for the good of the audience, and for the lecture-fee (which is, of course, considered as merely incidental), while the other is given for the money alone, leaving out all considerations of benefit.

Thirdly, all come now to treat of the lectured, who differ very naturally, as they ought, "with the locality, whether it be New York, Little Piddington, or Barriobol Centre. Some audiences are good-natured, intelligent, sympathetic; others are quite the reverse; and many are of a mongrel order. This completes, Admiring Associates (to speak after a Carlylean fashion), the round of my sapient observations, and now, hurra for the moral!

But Jacob interrupts me—with a question of course. "Why don't I give a lecture?" I'm astounded! Oh, interrogatory Man, why don't I join the Ravel troupe, and turn somersault, and dance the polka on a tight rope? There! your question is answered in a right Yankee style, by making another in return.

Quite an array of names are paraded in the papers over proposals to lecture. To the persons they represent, we say: "Go it, oh, ye speakers! Large audiences and plenty of dimes to you, but for us, deliverance from hearing you!"

No, not for us the crowded hall, but rather this old arm-chair by the sunny South window, near a row of shelves laden with goodly volumes, and where from the opposite wall, beams the mild face of one of Raphael's Malonnas. There stands Schiller, the poet of yearning, and the ideal; and here lies Goethe, the poet of nature and real life; while not far off, is Uhland, the poet of sad, but sweet, content. Shall one of our own volumes, written by yourself, with "Jasper" imprinted on the titlepage, ever lie upon this table? Perhaps—no, never, with the idea of writing a book full of moral, stirring thoughts, destined to warm, comfort, and elevate the world, bears for us a strange, undefinable fascination. A true author is the regenerator and savior of his age.

This recalls the announcement of a new work, a posthumous volume, of Margaret Fuller d'Ossoli, who was one of the finest conversationists, in all likelihood, if her biographers are to be believed, that ever enchanted a listener. Good conversationists now-a-days are "few and far between" (a new quotation). There are plenty of plausible writers; nearly every one can indite a note more than ordinarily stupid letter; but few can converse with ease and fluency, in a ready, forcible, and pointed manner. People have a certain mode of drawing out their thoughts by jerks and starts, but of such a thing as conversation proper, they have not the faintest suspicion; and so we make no commonplace, supercilious assertion when we remark, that the art of expression sadly needs a regeneration, or rather, as we're speaking religiously, a resurrection from the grave of insanity into which it has unwittingly fallen. No wonder the spiritualists chaffed concerning the blessed time when words shall be dispensed with, and soul flow with soul in a heavenly commingling of thought and feeling.

Even Jacob does not converse well. He has a strange faculty for hesitating, and coming to a general standstill. But this results from a good cause. So many visions, thoughts, and fancies, seem to gleam upon his mind as with the face of an angel, and instantly disappear, without remaining long enough to permit expression of their glorious beauty and significance, that words grow weak and useless; and this inability to render these visions permanent, and thus reveal them to others, amounts almost to positive pain.

Al! he's reading over my shoulder what I've just written concerning him, and turns slowly away with his strange peculiar smile, a twinge of the eyes rather than the lips. Sunlight seems to hover about the faces of certain people when they break into a smile—such a smile as can only be acquired through long trial and sorrow, reminding one of the rainbow, all the more beautiful because of the gloom and tempest from which it springs!

But stop! An idea has just struck, but not seriously injured me. A few paragraphs back, I spoke of writing a book. But now I'm resolved, yes, determined. There's never a "perhaps," or "maybe," in the case. I will do it! and moreover, it shall be dedicated to a triad of immortal celebrities—Greely, Bonner, and Stephen H. Branch! It shall be the eulogistic epos of the Nineteenth Century, and rehearse in thrilling strains the adventures of Haddock and La Mouton, the pugilistic careers of Price and Australia Kelly, the arrival of the *Great Eastern*, and the recent religious movement towards the inauguration of sentimental Catholicism, to give a moral coloring to the anomalous mixture. So, Able Editor, it will not be made of nothing, as the mysterious "Quelqu'un" asserted of poetry a fortnight ago—not at all; and it shall be readable too, of course. I could not possibly write otherwise, as this paragraph proves. (Don't you hate vanity?) And even the Boston newspaper shall sink blushing into oblivion, when placed beside it. This we promise.

"What nonsense are you writing now?" the Interrogatory Man inquires. I tell him, he smiles derisively, and thinks he won't like my proposed epic. But the old Latin proverb, "do quibus est," accounts for it all, which being translated meanly, I suppose, "what's silver to Peter is pewter to Paul." Am I not a faithful translator?

MONUMENTAL.

MR. EVERETT is appointed to prepare "an address to the people of the nation" to show that the project for the erection of a monument at Lexington is thoroughly national in its character. Should the orator print this effort with all her statutory ornaments, the volume should be entitled "STATUES AT LARGE."

Thoughts and Things.

BY ADA CLARK.

No. I.

By some extraordinary coincidence, nearly all the serial stories which recently animated the pages of magazine literature have suddenly come to a close. Perhaps it is that the mind bursts into immediate maturity under the ripening influences of the full Autumn, and feels that the time for bringing in the harvest is at hand.

Of the serial novel can dispute the incalculable superiority of Mrs. Stowe's "MEXICAN WOODS." It is the most powerful work of fiction which has sprung from the American Press. It is a religious work, full of religious subjects, yet it pity the staunch old Presbyterian who reads its pages, unless he be proof and bulwark 'gainst all reasoning. What keen, resolute, dispassionate onslaughts upon the Calvinistic beliefs. What ripping up of the body and soul of the old Puritanic faith! It would be impossible to conceive of a more horrid and ghastly mental picture, than that she shows us induced in a whole community by the prevalence of hideous dogmas which men have dared to call the religion of Christ. There are passages in "MEXICAN WOODS," whose stately and superb command of language, whose deep pathos, whose indescribable eloquence, I know not how to compare with anything in the prose literature of the English language. It is a book which will not be forgotten. The limpid blue eyes of Mary, full of infinite sorrows, shine tender and sad, into the innermost recesses of the memory.

But the inevitable discovery, the ignominious penny, has turned up again, before the eyes of the all-berolding critics. Perchance they say, a woman may have gathered the materials for this work, but she certainly cannot have tinkered them together. This scene is too vigorous, too bold, too learned, it comes upon us with too much force, we feel that it is a man's feat, that is taking our minds under the ribs. Keep, keep your soft fingers, madame, for stitching together the minor, unessential parts of your story; your brother the preacher, who is never truly great except when he is writing surreptitiously under your name, shall work out for you all the vital and essential details of the same.

Oh! that I were wise, like these critics, from whom the heads of their brothers are never hidden. I too, know occasionally the hands of my sisters, but it is generally by the whiteness of their sweet little fingers, and the exceeding softness of the skin. But when it is dabbled in printer's ink, I have lost my wisdom, I care not what sex it wears, I am only ambitious that it's force be not demonstrated about the region of my ears.

But for these noble martyr men who make immortal reputations for women, and are themselves forever unknown and mute! Why is it that their works do not betray them for themselves, when the naked hand-print of their power is never to be mistaken on the lights and of a woman's thoughts? No palms have they, not even the inverted triumph of the thorn-crown. Nothing but dark silence for these invisible Titans of literature, these dumb Atlases, who lift up immortals on their shoulders, and are forever hidden and speechless beneath them.

Trumpets have continually increased in interest. Evidently Trumpets were not drawn in the beginning, and all the interest hangs on the last suit. It is from the most excellent hand of G. W. Curtis. At first I feared it promised to be dry and prosing, but it has steadily gathered interest, and blossomed forth in great glory at last. Taking it as a whole, it is a most spirited and graphic story, and will compare most bravely with any of the serial stories we have just had from the great English masters.

Charles Reade's *Good Fight* is written in his usual fascinating style, but he does not seem at home in the antique. He is a prophet of the modern. It was very cunning in him to place Margaret in a delicate situation near the end,—it was his only chance of warming our hearts towards her.

Thackeray's *Virginians* must create a profound interest in all who are accustomed to his style, but it is less animated than the *Newcomers*.

He cannot make George Washington an entertaining character; that great man wants a pedestal to stand on, or a broken horse upon which to sit. When stepping down from his greatness, he leaves his carpet-bag in our hall, enters our back parlor, and announces his intention of joining us in a mildly horn of lager, we cannot help feeling our spirits dimly dashed, and almost dare to think he is a little just a little of a bore. Heaven forgive me for speaking thus of the Father of my country, but I should wish he had not distinguished me so highly; I should wish he had selected Pfaff's, as the place worthy to furnish lager for heroes.

Dickens is not so entertaining as usual, but then, my children, what would you have? *All the Year Round* needed a commencement from the hand of Dickens, and he had many and other important works to do. If the simultaneous action of too many cooks will prove fatal to a single broth, so also will the simultaneous manufacture of too many broths prove fatal to a single cook.

I have just read *Out of the Depths*. It is a very well written, in the main, but full of the most wearisome religious reflections of the work are introduced to it. Paul's ingenious suggestion, in season and out of season, I even went to see it translated at the Museum. There it reminded me of the famous silk stocking of metaphysical notoriety, which had been darned so often, that not an atom of the original texture of it remained. The great topical dialectical alkimish, as to whether the same essence which collected around it form color, texture, etc., in the original silk, was still here, though expressed in cotton thread, might easily be adapted to this play. The story of *Out of the Depths* has been accommodated with so many patches, of such miscellaneous cut and shape, and color, that it seems as if all of the exploded stage effects, the renowned conventional characters, the departed dramatic conversations and costumes, had floated themselves upon it, and swarmed in a horrid little population beneath its loose and unclaimed roof.

Yet both book and play have elements of success in their intention, which is good. The rehabilitation of the unfortunate woman will ever be a subject of deep interest to all earnest and just minds, even as it ever has been since the time when of all the world, the only one without sin refused to cast a stone at her.

A HINT TO THE WISE, ETC.

MR. THOMAS MEAGHER, has recently delivered a lecture in Boston with the following characteristic title: "Jonathan Swift Dean of Saint Patrick; the slanders of Thackeray refuted." Mr. Meagher "trusted that it would be his proud achievement to restore the defaced likeness of the intrepid patriot," and in the course of his remarks gave to his unappreciative countrymen, the following "strong hint, which we hope as earnestly as Mr. Meagher can, that they will take." "At the age of 33, Swift possessed what every Irishman should possess, the means of an independent livelihood on the soil of Ireland."

A MID SUGGESTION.

A conflict having arisen between President Buchanan and Governor Wise as to which shall have the honor of hanging poor Brown, it is respectfully suggested by a high intervening party that he be hung between the two.

Aux Enfants Terribles!

A switch in time saves nine.
Hope never comes that comes to all.

Speranza's Apology.

Downing's Description of Page's Venus.
Ready on the half-shell.

The Rising Game.

The All England Eleven are ready to bet that if you bring together all the Cricketers in the world, they will level the whole lump.

Apothegm.

Uneasy lies the head without a crown.

"A FEW TRIFLES, AND A TRUTH OR SO."

BY NOBODY IN PARTICULAR.

Some people have nice ideas of honor. For instance: At an up-down whist party, last week, two of our money kings, Broadstreet and Wallstreet, were playing against each other. Broadstreet had just taken the odd trick: the "honors" were "easy." "That makes us four," said Broadstreet, marking that number of points for his side.

"No; three," said Wallstreet.

"Excuse me; it is four."

"Come! I'll bet you five dollars that it was only three."

"Well," replied the cautious financier, "I don't feel sure enough to bet, but I'll give you my word of honor."

A distinguished morning contemporary is responsible for this remarkable paragraph, appearing among its city items:

"At an early hour yesterday morning, one of the River Policemen stationed at Pier No. 18, North River, found floating near the wharf the body of a young man apparently twenty years of age. The corpse was almost immediately recognized and handed over to his distressed family. No cause can be assigned for this rash act, but it is generally supposed that this unfortunate young man had been guilty of the imprudence of passing the night in the *Thames*."

From a Boston paper which, from motives of charity, we refrain from naming, we extract the following, omitting the names of the parties concerned:

"Boy Saver.—We learn that a little son of Mr. _____, near the 'Chops,' in Woolwich, while playing with another boy, was shot, on Friday afternoon last, with a gun loaded for grease, which had been carelessly left in a shed, where the boys got hold of it. The charge entered just above the eye, carrying away a portion of the skull, and exposing the brain, and leaving a frightful wound. The little sufferer is a year old—the other boy a year younger."

This is doing the infantile prodigy business up to the 'hub.'

The woman whose love has passed becomes at once completely dead to him who has been the object of it. He knocks at her door, and she does not answer; at her heart, and there is no longer any response.

The Meerchaum Coloring Mania.

Being a Conversation overheard on the steps of St. Nicholas.

1st SWAZ (coming up hastily).—I say, Gus, have you heard the news? Phil Howard is dead, committed suicide in his room last night.

2d LANGUID DRUM (smoking languidly).—How very absurd! What should he want to do the fish, an should like to know? His meerchaum was getting cloudy.

At a trial in a Vermont court, several years ago, a French lady had been suborned as a witness, and was called upon to give her testimony. She was a stranger in the place, and "the Court" felt itself bound to address her in her native tongue. But "the Court's" education in the *parlez-vous* line had been sadly neglected, and how to administer the oath in an intelligible form to the silent lady before him was for some moments a puzzling question. What was to be done? The Judge called upon several of the lawyers near him, but they all avowed their ignorance of the language then so supposedly necessary. Finally the counsel for the defendant, a clever Yankee, feeling himself equal to the occasion, volunteered to extricate "the Court" from its embarrassment. He accordingly rose and addressed the lady witness in these terms:

"Vou juras zat vat you here testify shall be so true, si whole true, and noding but so true, so help you mon Dieu!"

The lady looked for a moment at the manufacturer of this hybrid sentence in silent astonishment, then turning to "the Court" said in perfectly good English, though with a slightly foreign accent:

"What does the gentleman say?"

The effect was electrical. Such a laugh went up to the roof of that country court room that the counsel for defendant has not heard the last of it to this day.

An old lady, making great pretensions to piety, one day saw the minister coming and, as usual on such occasions, ran for her Bible, sat down in her rocking-chair, and seemed to be reading very attentively when he entered the room.

"Ah! Mrs. Jenkins," said he, "I'm glad to see you always with the good Book in your hands."

"Yes, I find the Scripture does me a powerful deal of good," was the reply.

"But," said the Dominie, advancing a step to see what particular passage had proved so consoling in the case of his devout parishioner, "you are holding your Bible upside down."

"Oh! that don't make any difference with me, Mr.—," replied the dame; "I'm left-handed."

An ardent, eminently a man of the day, now forced to wear glasses, though not yet of middle age, was recently asked whether a certain rival of his in literature was not more near-sighted than he.

"I should say he was decidedly so," replied the witty man of letters. "Do you know that when I am a little way off he takes me for a writer of the eighteenth century?"

A gentleman, whose mind especially inclines towards the grotesque and horrible, was recently sitting at the dinner-table of a friend when

